A SHORT LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

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M. FLORENCE TIDDEMAN

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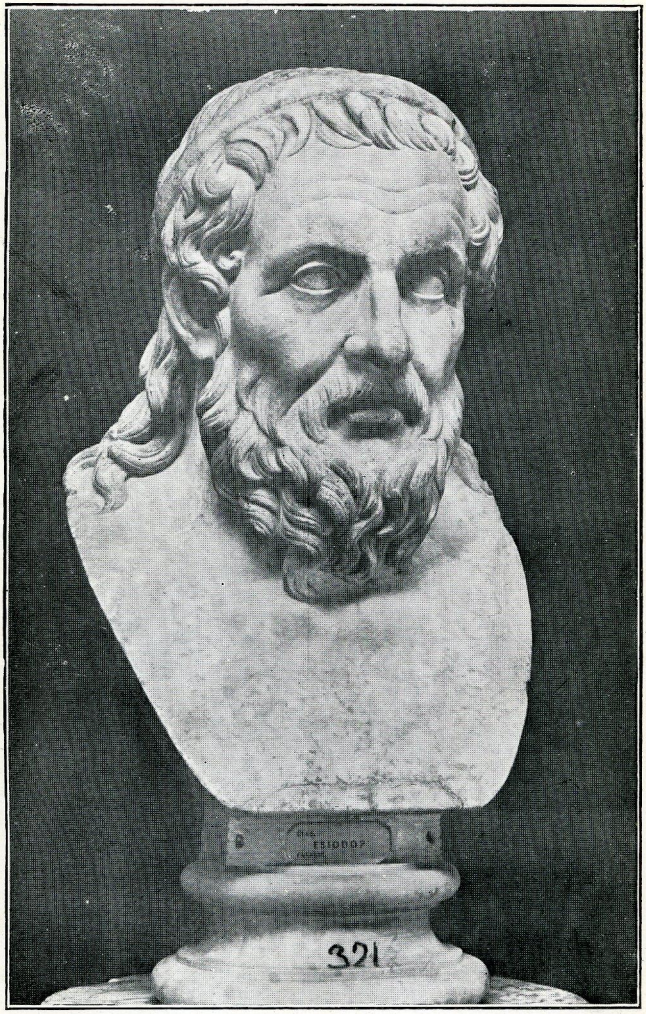

APOLLONIUS OF TYANA (see p. 29)

A SHORT LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

GATHERED FROM MANY SOURCES

BY

M. FLORENCE TIDDEMAN

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THIS LIFE OF HIM

WHO LAST GAVE HIS BODY

FOR

THE COMING OF THE LORD

I DEDICATE

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BROUGHT THIS BLESSING TO THE WORLD

A SHORT LIFE
OF
APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

PART I

MR. G. R. S. MEAD—from whose book, *Apollonius of Tyana*, I have taken much of the material for this small study—says that with the exception of the Christ no more interesting personage than Apollonius of Tyana appears upon the stage of Western history in those early years, that is, the first century A.D.

In *The Inner Life*, Vol. I, p. 19, Mr. C. W. Leadbeater writes: "Jesus received the incarnation of Apollonius of Tyana . . .," and on p. 32 he adds: "Nineteen hundred years ago Apollonius of Tyana was sent out by the Brotherhood upon a mission, one feature of which was that he was to found in various countries certain magnetic centres. Objects of the nature of talismans were given to him, which he was to bury at these chosen spots, in order that the force which they radiated might prepare

these places to be the centres of great events in the future. Some of those centres have already been utilised, but some have not, and all these latter are to be employed in the immediate future in connection with the work of the coming Christ. So that much of the detail of His work was already definitely planned nearly two thousand years ago, and arrangements even on the physical plane were being made to prepare for it."

Before attempting to give you any details of the life and work of Apollonius, I must put before you some of the difficulties of the task; for not only are the different reports which have been handed down absolutely contradictory, but the only person whom one would have supposed capable of giving out the truth in the matter is quite unable to do so, because he is entirely in the dark as to the real mission of the philosopher, the reason of his continual wanderings here, there, and everywhere, being hidden from his only companion. This, the only companion of Apollonius, was a man who was devoted to his person, who followed him with the fidelity of a dog, who had very little more brain and less intuition than a dog, and one who, never having been admitted to any part of the Mysteries, was entirely ignorant of the true mission of Apollonius. Mr. Mead seems to have no inkling of the reason for this but, pondering over this life, I have come to the conclusion that Apollonius chose this man, Damis, as his close and constant companion for the

very reason that, being completely in the dark as to his work, Damis could give to the world at large no information on the subject. As we shall see later on in our study, silence was felt to be so important that Apollonius went through a five years' discipline of self-imposed silence before he began his chief work.

First, as to the different reports handed down: Lucian, the witty writer of the first half of the second century, makes the subject of one of his satires a pupil of Apollonius, "one," he says, "who was acquainted with all the tragedy of his life." A contemporary of Lucian classes Apollonius with Moses and Zoroaster and other Magi of antiquity. We have also a book (formerly attributed to Justin Martyr, who flourished in the second quarter of the second century) in which certain questions are put forward. Question 24 runs thus: "If God is the maker and master of creation, how do the consecrated objects of Apollonius have power in the [various] orders of that creation? For as we see, they check the fury of the waves and the power of the winds and the inroads of vermin and attacks of wild beasts." Here we have a very hornets' nest of a controversy which gathered round the discussion as to whether Apollonius could and *did* perform miracles. I take it that we are fully aware of the fact that "miracles" are but the expression of unknown laws, but those who followed close on the heels of Christianity's early exponents, and others,

who through ignorance were jealous that these powers should be in the hands of any but its great Founder, spent many words and much energy in trying to prove that Apollonius could not work miracles; and when anyone was forced to allow that miracles *were* performed by our philosopher, such an one fell back upon that most useful of scapegoats, the Devil—the miracles must have been wrought by the help of the Devil.

Some of those who occupied high positions honoured our philosopher in certain ways, as, for instance, the Emperor Caracalla, 211-217, who built a chapel or monument to Apollonius, and the next Emperor, Alexander Severus, 217-235, who placed in his lararium statues of Christ, Abraham, Orpheus and Apollonius. The Emperor Aurelian, 270-275, when besieging Tyana, had a vision of Apollonius and vowed a temple to him. Vopiscus, the writer of the end of the third century, is very enthusiastic about Apollonius whom he calls "a sage of the most widespread renown and authority, an ancient philosopher and a true friend of the gods, indeed, a manifestation of Deity". And Vopiscus promises to write a life of Apollonius in Latin "so that," he says, "his deeds and words may be on the tongue of all, for as yet the only accounts are in Greek . . . for what among men," he exclaims, "was more holy, what more worthy of reverence, what more venerable, what more god-like than he? He it was who gave life to the dead. He it was who

did and said so many things beyond the power of men." Vopiscus did not fulfil his promise, but Soterichus, an Egyptian epic poet of the last decade of the third century, Nichomachus, and Tascius Victorianus all wrote lives of Apollonius, though unfortunately none of these have been preserved. A certain Machus, whose name signified "King" but who was called Porphyry instead, in allusion to the usual colour of his robes, wrote a celebrated treatise against Christianity. This was publicly destroyed by the Emperor, but Prophyry's life of Pythagoras and his School is extant, as is that on the same subject by Iamblichus, and both state that much of their information is derived from Apollonius. It is interesting to remember that Iamblichus is now the Master Hilarion.

Somewhere about A.D. 305, two books were written by Hierocles, Governor of Palmyra, Bythnia and Alexandria, and a philosopher; these contained a criticism of the claims of the Christians and were called *A Truthful Address to the Christians* or more shortly *The Truth-Lover*. The matter was based chiefly on previous works by Celsus and Porphyry, but Hierocles brought into his books a fresh subject of controversy, asserting that as Apollonius worked miracles these could not be claimed as the exclusive right, and proof of the divinity, of Jesus. The information concerning Apollonius was derived by Hierocles from the life of the philosopher written by Philostratus, of which mention will be

made later. Hierocles seems to have shown such knowledge of the inner teachings of Christianity that the Church Father, Lactantius, in 315, suggests that Hierocles must have undergone the discipline connected with these inner teachings, he then proceeds to take the wind out of the sails of Hierocles' criticism by asserting that Christians do not believe that Christ is God because He did wonderful things, but because all that was prophesied of Him by the prophets was accomplished in Jesus. A treatise, still in existence, was then brought out by Eusebius of Cæsarea as a reply to the criticism of Hierocles, and in this treatise Eusebius admits that Apollonius was a wise and virtuous man but thinks that there is not proof enough of the wonderful things asserted of him—and here we find the scapegoat, the Devil, used to great effect. If, says Eusebius, these wonderful things ever did take place, they must have been effected by the help of the Devil. In regard to this treatise, Mr. Mead remarks that Eusebius shows himself as possessed of a first-rate critical faculty and that if he had but used this faculty on the documents of the Church, of which he was the first historian, posterity would have owed him an eternal debt of gratitude. "But," says Mr. Mead, "like so many apologists, Eusebius could only see one side; when anything touching Christianity was called in question, justice was set aside—he with many another considers that it would have been blasphemy to have used his critical

faculty on the documents which relate the miracles of Jesus, and this problem remains the same to-day."

The sixteenth century saw this controversy disinterred, but since the idea of the Devil as the prime mover in all miracles except those of Jesus had lost its hold with the progress of scientific thought, the difficulties regarding the wonders wrought by Apollonius had again to be dealt with, and a new criticism arose. It was suggested that the life of Apollonius was a plagiarism of the life of Jesus, and this was not brought forward until long after the time when such an assertion could have been easily refuted; and though this theory is carefully worked out, it is only too evident that as a plagiarism of the Gospel story this life of Apollonius is a conspicuous failure. At the end of the third century, before the first controversy, Arnobius, who was the teacher of Lactantius, refers to Apollonius and classes him among the Magi, such as Zoroaster and others. Even after the controversy, at the end of the fourth century, the Church Fathers were not all of the same mind concerning Apollonius, for at one and the same time John Chrysostom bitterly denounces Apollonius as a deceiver and evil-doer, and Jerome asserts that the philosopher found everywhere something to learn and something whereby he could become a better man; also in the next century Augustine, while ridiculing any attempt at comparison between Apollonius and Jesus, says that the

character of Apollonius was far superior to that of Jove in respect of virtue.

A few years later, Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Claremont, translated the life of Apollonius into Latin for Leon, the councillor of King Euric, and though this Life is unfortunately lost, yet in writing on this subject to his friend Leon, Sidonius says: "Read the life of a man who (religion apart) resembles you in many things; a man sought out by the rich, yet who never sought for riches; who loved wisdom and despised gold; a man frugal in the midst of feastings, clad in linen in the midst of those clothed in purple, austere in the midst of luxury. . . In fine, to speak plainly, perchance no historian will find in ancient times a philosopher whose life is equal to that of Apollonius."

Still later, we find the Church Father, Isidorus of Pelusium, who died 450, bluntly denying that there is any truth in the assertion that Apollonius "consecrated many spots in the world for the safety of the inhabitants," without attempting to bring forward anything in proof that his denial has any weight. Thus we see that even among Church Fathers some approve and some disapprove of Apollonius, but philosophers with one voice praise him unstintedly. Ammianus Marcelinus, the friend of the philosopher-Emperor Julian—and, we are told, "the last Roman subject to compose a profane history in the Latin language"—calls Apollonius "that most renowned philosopher"; while Eunapius,

a pupil of Chrysanthius, one of the teachers of the Emperor Julian, writing in the fourth century, says that Apollonius was more than a philosopher, that he was "a middle term, as it were, between gods and men". Eunapius belonged to a School which knew the nature of the attainments ascribed to Apollonius, and he suggests that Philostratus should have called his biography "The Sojourn of a God among Men," adding, "indeed, as late as the fifth century, Cassiodorus, in his Chronicon, written down to the year 519, speaks of Apollonius as 'the renowned philosopher'."

Following on the trail, we find among the Byzantine writers of the eighth century the monk George Syncellus, without the slightest criticism of Apollonius, declaring that he was the first and most remarkable of all the illustrious people who appeared under the Roman Empire. The eleventh century brings a contradiction, for the monk Xiphilinus calls Apollonius "a clever juggler and magician," while in the same century Cidrenus writes of him as "an adept Pythagorean philosopher," giving several instances in Byzantium of the efficacy of his power over the elements. Nicetas states that as late as the thirteenth century there were certain bronze doors, formerly consecrated by Apollonius, which had to be melted down because they had become objects of superstition even for the Christians themselves. Though these reports are so contradictory yet they are enough to show that, with the exception

of theological prejudice, the concensus of opinion is always in favour of Apollonius.

Flavius Philostratus, about the year 216, wrote the only life of Apollonius which has come down to us, and records in the hands of a little group (who may be of interest to F.T.S.) constituted the chief source of his information. I have already mentioned that the Emperor Caracalla honoured the memory of Apollonius with a chapel, and it was the mother of Caracalla, Domina Julia, who collected the MSS. from which Philostratus compiled the life of the philosopher. Philostratus formed one of a circle of famous writers and thinkers gathered round Domina Julia, the philosopher-Empress, as she was called. Domina Julia was the beautiful daughter of Bassianus, the priest of the Sun at Emesa in Syria, and the Emperor Septimus Severus (after the death of his first wife) sought her out and married her, because, says Gibbon, she had "a royal Nativity". She was the guiding spirit of the Empire during the reign of her husband and that of her son Caracalla. All three members of the Imperial family were students of occult science and the age was pre-eminently one in which the occult arts, good and bad, were a passion. Here are the remarks of the sceptical Gibbon on this matter: he writes: "Like most Africans, Severus was passionately addicted to the vain studies of magic and divination, deeply versed in the interpretation of dreams and omens, and perfectly acquainted with the science of

judicial astrology, which, in almost every age except the present, has maintained its dominion over the mind of man. . . . Domina Julia deserved all that the stars could promise her. She possessed, even in an advanced age (she died A.D. 217), the attractions of beauty, and united to a lively imagination a firmness of mind, and strength of judgment, seldom bestowed on her sex. . . . In her son's reign, she administered the principal affairs of the Empire with a prudence that supported his authority, and with a moderation that sometimes corrected his wild extravagances. Julia applied herself to letters and philosophy with some success, and with the most splendid reputation. She was the patroness of every art and the friend of every man of genius." [1]

"We thus see," says Mr. Mead, "even from Gibbon's somewhat grudging estimate, that Domina Julia was a woman of remarkable character, whose outer acts give evidence of an inner purpose, and whose private life has not been written. It was at her request, that Philostratus wrote the life of Apollonius, and it was she who supplied him with certain MSS. that were in her possession, as a basis; . . . She was an ardent collector of books from every part of the world, especially of the MSS. of philosophers and of memoranda and biographical notes relating to the famous students of the inner nature of things." [2]

[1] Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, I, vi.

[2] Mead's *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 55.

So we realise that it is solely by the good offices of Domina Julia that we have this Life of Apollonius by Flavius Philostratus, the only one that has come down to us.

An interesting line of study and research might be followed by students, struck as I have been by the similarity between the characters of Domina Julia, who died A.D. 217, and Hypatia, A.D. 370-415.

PART II

THOSE who are part of that great Hierarchy through which God guides evolution, look far, far ahead; They think in thousands of years instead of in tens or hundreds, and They send out Their emissaries to prepare the way for work which will not materialise on the physical plane for centuries. And such an emissary was Apollonius of Tyana, who, in his last life, as the disciple Jesus, had lived in Palestine and had given his pure body to be used by the World-Teacher, the Christ, when He moved among men two thousand years ago. "The Nazarene," men called him, for he was one of a sect called the Nazarenes—a sect whose members ate no meat, drank no wine, and wore their hair uncut.

In his next incarnation he was born, in the early years of the Christian era, at Tyana in Southern Capadocia. As stories of wonderful happenings are always told about the nativity of the Great Ones, so were these stories told of the birth of Apollonius. His parents were of ancient family and considerable fortune, but this he handed over to different relatives when he became twenty-one. Most of it went to his elder brother whom he had rescued from a dissolute life, and, by the gentleness of his method

of dealing with the evil, had restored in him his manhood. For himself Apollonius kept a bare pittance, saying that he required but little and should never marry. At this time Tarsus was a famous centre of learning, and here Apollonius was sent when he was fourteen ; but the insincerity and shallowness of the teaching given there disgusted the serious youth, and he turned from it, going to the sea-coast town, Ægæ, not far away, and is described as " plunging with ardour into the study of philosophy ".

Here, at Ægæ, there was a temple of Æsculapius who was acclaimed as the god of medical art ; a sect of priests attached to this temple devoted themselves to healing and were called Æsculapiadæ. They regarded the knowledge of medicine as so sacred that it was handed down from father to son with great secrecy, and many cures were wrought. Apollonius became very intimate with the priests of the temple, and here at Ægæ he was able also to become the pupil of those who taught the philosophy of several schools of thought, notably the Platonic, Stoic, Peripatetic and Epicurean. As the result of a careful study of all these schools of philosophy, Apollonius attached himself finally to the Pythagorean with what is described as " an extraordinary depth of comprehension ".

It is not surprising to find this comprehension of his termed by his master, Euxenus, " extraordinary," for to Apollonius this philosophy was " the way of

life" whereas Euxenus was merely a "teacher" of that philosophy and not a follower of its discipline. In fact Apollonius was really much greater than his teacher, and we are told that his extraordinary "memory," which infused life into the dull utterances of his tutor, urged him on, and at the age of sixteen he "soared into the Pythagorean life, winged by some greater one". Asked by his tutor how he should begin his new mode of life, Apollonius answered: "As doctors purge their patients." He held that all food that had animal life in it densified his mind and made it impure, and took what he considered the only pure form of food—that which the earth produced, fruit and vegetables. Although wine is made from fruit, yet he abstained from this for, he said, "it rendered turbid the æther in the soul and destroyed the composure of the mind."

Apollonius followed the Pythagorean method of using, on his bed and on his person, no wool, only linen; he went barefoot and wore his hair uncut. At this time he took up his abode in the temple of Æsculapius to the joy and admiration of the priests and with the express approval of the unseen helpers by whom the cures were wrought. In fact, he became so much respected for his life of piety and asceticism that a proverb arose concerning him among the Cilicians who would say: "Where are you hurrying? Are you off to see the youth?"

After he reached the age of twenty-one, Apollonius took a vow of silence for five years, for he felt

that he should pass through this discipline before he began to teach or write on philosophy. Although he kept silence for five years he did not, during this time, make for himself the easiest conditions for carrying it out, but travelled about from city to city in Pamphylia and Cilicia. Although the temptations to break his self-imposed vow were many and the laughter-loving populace made great fun of the "silent philosopher," his chief protection lay in his quiet dignity and the power of the glance of his eyes which now, we are told, "could see both past and future." Often and often, when difficulties arose or unscrupulous wit was used against him, he was on the verge of bursting out against some exceptional insult, but he restrained himself with the silent thought: "Heart patient be, and thou, my tongue, be still." Though so young, and in spite of the disability of his self-imposed silence, he was able to go about doing good, and on one occasion, at Aspendus in Pamphylia, was able to prevent a serious corn-riot by silencing the crowd with his commanding gestures and then writing on his tablets what he wished to say.

After the five years of silence there is a considerable gap in the biography, but Apollonius seems to have spent some time in the country south of Palestine (which was, at this time, a regular hotbed of mystic communities) and travelled from one to another of the temples, shrines, and communities. However much he travelled, nevertheless, he allowed

nothing to interfere with a certain regular division of the day. Particular religious exercises belonged to the time of sunrise; the nature of these he told only to those who had also passed through the discipline of four or five years of silence. Next he gave some time to those with whom he happened to be staying, whether he were in a brotherhood, community or temple. The most important part of his work lay in the purifying or improving of ancient traditions and communities, but he also taught the people, though this latter he did after midday, saying that those who lived the inner life should, on day's dawning, enter the presence of the gods, then spend the time till midday in giving and receiving instruction in holy things, and not until after midday devote themselves to human affairs. At night he bathed in cold water, as did many of the mystics, notably the Essenes and Therapeuts.

Somewhere between A.D. 41 and A.D. 54 Apollonius travelled to India, visiting the Brahmans and Buddhists, carrying on evidently among these also his special work. Some of his disciples endeavoured to dissuade him from undertaking this Indian travel but he was not to be induced to give it up, for his guides, he assured them, were "Wisdom and his inner monitor". "Since ye are faint-hearted," said he to them, "I bid you farewell. As for myself, I must go whithersoever Wisdom and my inner self may lead me. The gods are my advisers and I can but rely on their counsels."

At Nineveh he met with Damis who became his constant companion. "Let us go together," said Damis, "thou shalt follow God, and I thee." Damis revered Apollonius as a Divine Being, often wondering at his marvellous powers yet never understanding them, and as he had always to remain in the outer courts of the temples and shrines which Apollonius visited, he constantly mentions his ignorance of his master's plans and purposes. From a remark made once by Mr. Krishnamurti, I gather that at a certain stage some people grow their souls best by being constantly with one of the Great Ones, soaking, so to speak, in Their vibrations and so gradually tuning up their own vibrations and preparing themselves for more understanding and active work later; I think that this may have been the case with Damis.

In the narrative of Damis the contrast of his timidity and the quiet courage of Apollonius is very marked, and when the latter was imprisoned by Domitian, Damis was only induced to realise that Apollonius was a willing victim by the phenomenal removal by Apollonius of his fetters. In an address (delivered to the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society) on the life of Apollonius, Mr. A. P. Sinnett thus described the incident during the trial of Apollonius at Rome before Domitian.[1] "His friends endeavour to dissuade him from venturing to Rome in obedience to the summons,

[1] *Transactions of the London Lodge*, No. 32.

but he even begins his journey thither in advance of the summons, having foreknowledge of its coming." He allowed Damis to accompany him, but obliged him to put off his Pythagorean dress. "I know we must suffer much," said Apollonius, "for the peculiar course of life we have adopted, but I am decidedly against your sharing in all its dangers and being cast into prison, which must be the consequence if you are betrayed by your habit. I wish you to follow me and to be present at all that passes, as one who in other respects loves me without being sworn to my philosophy."

The Pretorian Prefect, Ælian, "had formerly loved Apollonius," and used to talk with him at Alexandria. He did his best to serve him on his arrival in Rome, though concealing his intention under the disguise of a superficial severity. Declaring that he intended "to prove the Sophist apart," he held a long conversation with him in private, warning him of the temper in which Domitian stood, and giving him various counsels of prudence. He explained the charges on which he would be arraigned. "Among them are noticed your dress, your manner of living and the adoration that is paid to you, to which is added the answer you gave the Ephesians relative to the plague . . . But the charge which of all others is the least credible, and which I know to be so from your known aversion to the shedding of blood, is one that appears to the Emperor the most likely to be true.

The charge is that you met Nerva in a field, where you sacrificed an Arcadian boy for him, that you did it to procure for him the death of the reigning Emperor, and that by this sacrifice you have given Nerva the hope of one day obtaining the Empire."

Ælian endeavoured to ameliorate the philosopher's lot as much as possible while he was in prison. But in a preliminary examination before the Emperor, Apollonius only increased the anger of the tyrant by his answers, and was sent back to prison to be loaded with chains . . . Damis' journal shows how the event of the fetters occurred. Damis himself was alone with his beloved Master in the prison at the time, and in an agony of apprehension at the dangers by which he appeared to be surrounded.

Apollonius endeavoured to reassure him. "There is no one will put us to death."

"But when, sir," asked Damis, "will you be set at liberty?"

"To-morrow," answered he, "if it depended on the judge, and this instant if it depended on myself."

And without a word more he drew his leg out of the fetters and said to Damis: "You see the liberty I enjoy, and therefore I request you will keep up your spirit."

It was on this occasion, Damis says, he was first sensible of Apollonius possessing a nature something divine and above what was human, for without offering a sacrifice, which he could not do in a prison, without sending up any prayers to the gods,

and without saying a word, he made a mockery of his fetters and again put his leg into them and continued to behave like men in chains.[1]

The day after this incident Apollonius directed Damis to leave him and join a friend of his, Demetrius, at Puteoli, near Naples. "You will salute Demetrius and then turn to the seaside, where is the island of Calypso, and there you will see me." Damis obeyed, though "he set out sore against his will". Soon afterwards the day of trial arrived. "Apollonius," writes his biographer, "appears more like a man taking part in a mere matter of dispute than as pleading a cause in which his life was concerned. He answered all questions put to him by the officers of the prison and the court, in a bantering tone, which was by no means laid aside when he was in the presence of the Emperor." [2]

Apollonius had prepared a long written defence, which document has been preserved and is printed *in extenso* in Philostratus' biography, but he was not allowed to read it at the trial. The proceedings seem to have consisted of questions put by the accuser, and answers by Apollonius of a sarcastic character. His denial of the charge about sacrificing the boy was complete and contemptuous, and it elicited applause from the spectators, louder than was suitable to the gravity of an Imperial tribunal.

[1] Here Mr. Sinnett is quoting from the *Life of Apollonius* by Philostratus.

[2] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

This note of praise was ascribed by the Emperor to the approbation of the spectators, and being himself affected by the strength and ingenuity of his answers, he said: "I acquit you of the crimes laid to your charge, but here you shall stay till I have had some conversation with you."

Apollonius thanked him, but added that, in consequence of the wicked informers by whom he was infested his cities were in ruins, the islands filled with exiles, the Senate with suspicion. "Listen to me if you please, if not send persons to take my body, for it is impossible to take my soul, and I will add not even my body, for as Homer says, not even thy deadly spear can slay me, because I am not mortal." In uttering these words he vanished from the tribunal. . . . While the stirring events described were in progress at Rome Damis had already arrived at Puteoli—the place near Naples, and had joined Demetrius. They were both a prey to terrible anxiety about their friend, and were walking together by the seashore, talking of all that had passed, when suddenly Apollonius joined them. At first his devoted disciples did not know whether he was himself or an apparition. He soon convinced them. "Doubting no longer the truth of what he said, they ran to the man and kissed him. Afterwards they asked him if he made a defence." . . . Apollonius said: "My friends, I have made my defence and we are victorious, I made it a few hours ago, whilst the day was verging to noon."

" How," said Demetrius, " have you performed so long a journey in so short a time." " Think of it as you please," answered Apollonius, " but think not I made use either of the ram of Phrygus or the wings of Daedalus." [1] Demetrius was not yet free from anxiety. He was afraid Domitian would send emissaries to seize Apollonius once more. But Apollonius bidding his fear to cease, said : " I wish to God it was not more easy for him to take you than it is to take me." [2] No attempt of the kind seems to have been made, and Apollonius resumed his wandering philosopher's life.[3]

Apollonius must have been one of the greatest travellers of antiquity, for, in spite of evident gaps in the notes of Damis, which do not record journeys in which he had no share, we learn that after leaving Nineveh, Apollonius stayed in Babylon one year and eight months, visiting different cities and centres in the neighbourhood—thence to the Indian frontier, probably by the Khyber Pass, as Taxila is the first city mentioned—and finally he spent four months at what Damis calls the " Monastery of the wise men ". This was probably at Nepal, for " Paraca " is mentioned as being near—Paraca is probably the nearest that Damis could get to Bharata, the general name for the Ganges valley. The " wise men " were probably Buddhists and they

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] A. P. Sinnett, *Transactions of the London Lodge*, No. 32.

dwelt in a place which looked to Damis like a fort or fortress. After this they visited Babylon, Nineveh, Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus; then on to Ionia, spending some time in Asia Minor, and especially at Ephesus, and so to Smyrna, Pergamus and Troy, crossing over to Lesbos and subsequently sailing for Athens. He spent some years in Greece, restoring the rites in the temples of Hellas and instructing the priests.

Later they were in Crete and, in the time of Nero, in Rome.

In A.D. 66, Nero's decree forbidding any philosopher to remain in Rome sent Apollonius away, and he went to Spain, landing at Gades (the modern Cadiz), crossed to Africa, and on by sea to Sicily, visiting all the principal cities and temples, and from there back to Greece after four years of absence. From Piræus he sailed for Chios and on to Rhodes and Alexandria, where he stayed some time, having several interviews with the future Emperor, Vespasian. From there he set out on a long journey up the Nile to Ethiopia, beyond the Cataracts, where he visited a community of ascetics whom Damis calls "Gymnosophists," which means the naked. On his return to Alexandria, Titus, who had just become Emperor, summoned Apollonius to meet him at Tarsus: later he must have returned to Egypt for visits are mentioned to the Phœnicians, Cilicians, Ionians, Achæans, and also to Italy.

During the years covered by these extensive travels, Vespasian had been Emperor from A.D. 69 to 79, and Titus from 79 to 81, in which year Domitian became Emperor. The trial of Apollonius in Rome, which we have noted, took place somewhere about 93, and in 96 we find him in Ephesus, for it was here that an occurrence took place of which Philostratus gives us a graphic account. Apollonius was delivering an address on philosophy at midday in one of the small parks or groves in the suburbs of Ephesus. To quote from Philostratus: "At first he sank his voice as though in some apprehension; he, however, continued his exposition, but haltingly, and with far less force than usual, as a man who had some other subject in his mind than that on which he is speaking; finally he ceased speaking altogether as though he could not find his words. Then staring fixedly on the ground, he started forward three or four paces, crying out: 'Strike the tyrant; strike!' And this, not like a man who sees an image in a mirror, but as one with the actual scene before his eyes, as though he were himself taking part in it."[1]

Apollonius cried to his audience: "Keep up your spirits, O Ephesians, for this day the tyrant is killed." Then he told the astonished people what he had seen, namely, that Domitian had been attacked by Stephanus and wounded; afterwards, as Philostratus tells us, "his body-guards, hearing the

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

noise and concluding all was not well, rushed into the closet and finding the tyrant fainting, put an end to his life." [1] Though the Ephesians wished it were true, they refused to believe it, thinking that Apollonius had taken leave of his senses, but he assured them: "You, on your part, are right to suspend your rejoicings till the news is brought you in the usual fashion; as for me, I go to return thanks to the gods for what I have myself seen." [2]

Other happenings of a supernormal character had occurred at different times during the life of Apollonius; for instance, when living at Ephesus he had predicted that they would suffer from a great plague, and while he was visiting Smyrna emissaries came to him from Ephesus, begging him to rescue the people from this terrible scourge. "When he heard this," says Philostratus, "he said, I think the journey is not to be delayed; and no sooner had he uttered the words than he was at Ephesus." [3] It was to this occurrence that Ælian referred as among the charges on which Apollonius was to be arraigned at his trial before Domitian in Rome, for when he appeared among the unhappy, plague-stricken Ephesians he reassured them, promising that he would put a stop to the disease. Records show that he was as good as his word.

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

During Nero's reign Tigellinus was the master of Rome under the Emperor and seems to have dreaded Apollonius' power of foretelling future events. Tigellinus summoned the philosopher before him in consequence of his having criticised the Emperor's conduct. Philostratus tells us that "an informer, well instructed, came forward, who had been the ruin of many. He held in his hand a roll, wherein was written the accusation, which he flourished about him like a sword before the eyes of Apollonius, boasting that he had given it a sharp edge, and that now his hour had come. Upon this Tigellinus unfolded the roll, when, lo and behold, neither letter nor character was to be seen. . . . All these things appeared, in the eyes of Tigellinus, divine, and above human power, and to show he did not wish to contend with a god, he bid him go where he pleased, as he was too strong to be subject to his authority." [1]

It was also in Rome, and about this time, that Apollonius worked a still greater wonder. "A girl on the point of being married, seemingly died, whose bier was followed by him who was to have been her husband, in all the affliction usual in like cases of interrupted wedlock. As she happened to be of a consular family, all Rome condoled with him. Apollonius meeting the funeral procession, said to the attendants: 'Set down the bier, and I will dry up the tears you are shedding for the maid,' whose

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

name he enquired after. Almost all the spectators present thought he was going to pronounce a funeral oration. But all he did was to touch the maid, and after uttering a few words over her in a low tone of voice, he wakened her from that death with which she seemed to be overcome. She immediately began to speak, and returned to her father's house, as Alcestes did of old, when recalled to life by Hercules. The relations of the girl presented Apollonius with 150,000 drachmas, which he in return begged to settle on her as a marriage portion." [1]

Philostratus says that the people looked upon Apollonius as a god, and tells that on one occasion, as he was moving about the streets, followed as usual by a great procession, "he met twelve men charged with robbery on their way to execution. When Apollonius saw them he said: 'I foresee all will not suffer, for that man,' pointing to one, 'has made a false confession.' Then turning to the executioners who were conducting them, he desired them not to go so fast to the place of punishment, and bid them to take care that the man to whom he pointed should be the last man to suffer, 'for I see,' says he, 'he is not guilty of the crime for which he is going to die.' . . . The event turned out as he wished. After eight of them had been beheaded, a horseman rode up with speed to the place of execution, and cried out: 'Spare Phorian! he is no robber! he confessed himself guilty of what he was innocent,

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius.*

through fear of the torture which has appeared from the confession of those put to the rack.' "[1]

We have no other description of Apollonius than that he was very beautiful : a bust of him can still be seen in a museum in Naples, as a friend corroborates who has recently seen it (February, 1926). The guide-book describes the bust as carefully executed, with a Zeus-like head, having a long beard and hair descending on to the shoulders, bound with a deep fillet. Damis describes Apollonius as ever mild, gentle, and modest, and in this manner, more like an Indian than a Greek though, when witnessing some special enormity, he would burst out indignantly against it. His mood was often pensive, and when not speaking he would remain for long with eyes cast down, plunged in deep thought. Though always stern with himself, he readily made excuses for others. As an instance of this the following may be cited : During Nero's reign, when, on his way to Rome, Apollonius was warned that he and his followers would be in danger, of thirty-four companions who set out with him only eight remained staunch enough to brave the threatened peril ; while praising the courage of those few who remained with him, he refused to blame as cowards the many who had fled.

" In spite of his extremely ascetic life Apollonius was a man of strong physique, so that even when he had reached the ripe age of four-score years, we are

[1] Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius.*

told, he was sound and healthy in every limb and organ, upright and perfectly formed. There was also a certain indefinite charm about him that made him more pleasant to look upon than even the freshness of youth, and this even though his face was furrowed with wrinkles, just as the statues in the temple at Tyana represented him in the time of Philostratus. In fact, says his rhetorical biographer, report sang higher praises over the charm of Apollonius in his old age than over the beauty of Alcibiades in his youth. In brief, our philosopher seems to have been of a most charming presence and lovable disposition; nor was his absolute devotion to philosophy of the nature of the hermit ideal, for he passed his life among men."[1] Said Apollonius: "I ever remember my Masters and journey through the world teaching what I have learned from Them." And this sentence gives us the clue to the mainspring of the indomitable energy and power of endurance so conspicuous all through his wonderful life of travel.

The last record which we have of these travels is that Apollonius crossed from Greece to Ionia at the time of the death of Domitian, and we find that he then stayed at Smyrna and Ephesus. At this point Apollonius sent Damis to Rome, ostensibly upon some mission, and himself departed—never to be seen again. Mr. Mead comments: "As to his age at the time of his mysterious disappearance from the

[1] G. R. S. Mead, *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 128.

pages of history, Philostratus tells us that Damis says nothing; but some, he adds, say he was eighty, some ninety, and some even an hundred. The estimate of eighty years seems to fit in best with the rest of the chronological indications." [1]

To turn to other aspects which throw light on our study—it is certain that many followers of Apollonius wore the same dress as himself and followed his mode of life. Repeated mention is also made of their accompanying him on his travels, sometimes as many as ten of them at the same time, but none of them were allowed to address others until they had fulfilled the vow of silence. "The most distinguished of his followers were Musonius, who was considered the greatest philosopher of the time after the Tyanean, and who was the special victim of Nero's tyranny, and Demetrius, 'who loved Apollonius.' These names are well known to history; of names otherwise unknown are the Egyptian Dioscorides, who was left behind owing to weak health on the long journey to Ethiopia, Menippus, whom he had freed from an obsession, Phædimus, and Nilus, who joined him from the Gymnosophists, and of course Damis, who would have us think that he was always with him from the time of their meeting." [2]

We are told that Apollonius wrote many letters to emperors, kings, philosophers, communities, and

[1] G. R. S. Mead, *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 80.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

states, and that he wrote after the manner of the *Lacedæmonion scytale*; this refers to a certain way of writing despatches in cypher. A strip of leather was rolled round a staff or baton, and on this the despatches were written lengthways so that when unrolled they were unintelligible. Hence *scytale* came to mean generally a Spartan despatch which was characteristically laconic in its brevity. We find, therefore, that Apollonius had a very concise way of writing short notes, and Philostratus quotes a number of these letters though he does not mention how he came by them; perhaps they were the collection of the philosopher's letters made by Hadrian. I quote one or two as specimens and give them in full.

This is one written to the magistrates of Sparta: "Apollonius to the Ephors, greeting! It is possible for men not to make mistakes, but it requires noble men to acknowledge they have made them."

And now we have an interchange of notes between Apollonius and another great philosopher of the time, "both of whom suffered imprisonment and were in constant danger of death."[1]

"Apollonius to Musonius, the philosopher, greeting! I want to go to you, to share speech and roof with you, to be of some service to you. If you still believe that Hercules once rescued Theseus from Hades, write what you would have. Farewell!"

[1] G. R. S. Mead, *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 146.

" Musonius to Apollonius, the philosopher, greeting ! Good merit shall be stored for you for your good thoughts ; what is in store for me is one who waits his trial and proves his innocence. Farewell."

" Apollonius to Musonius, greeting ! Socrates refused to be got out of prison by his friends and went before the judges. He was put to death. Farewell ! "

" Musonius to Apollonius, the philosopher, greeting ! Socrates was put to death because he made no preparation for his defence. I shall do so. Farewell ! "

Mr. Mead tells us that Musonius, the Stoic, was sent to penal servitude by Nero.

Apollonius wrote this note to the Cynic Demetrius, one of his most devoted followers :

" Apollonius, the philosopher, to Demetrius, the Dog,[1] greeting ! I give thee to Titus, the Emperor, to teach him the way of kingship, and do you in turn give me to speak him true ; and be to him all things but anger. Farewell ! "

There is also a collection of ninety-five letters, some of which Jowett and others think may very well be genuine. I will quote a few. Euphrates, the champion of pure rationalistic ethic against the science of sacred things, was hence Apollonius ' great enemy. Writing to him, Apollonius says :

" The Persians call those who have the divine faculty (or are god-like) Magi. A Magus, then,

[1] *I.e.*, Cynic.

is one who is a minister of the gods, or one who has by nature god-like faculty. You are no Magus but reject the gods (*i.e.*, are an atheist)."

This letter is addressed to Criton :

" Pythagoras said that the most divine art was that of healing. And if the healing art is most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body ; for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly."

Apollonius wrote against the practice of blood-sacrifice to the priests of Delphi, thus :

" Heraclitus was a sage, but even he never advised the people of Ephesus to wash out mud with mud."

Apollonius sent a reproof to those " who think themselves wise " among his would-be followers :

" If any say he is my disciple, then let him add he keeps himself apart out of the Baths, he slays no living thing, eats of no flesh, is free from envy, malice, hatred, calumny, and hostile feelings, but has his name inscribed among the race of those who've won their freedom."

Now we come to a very long letter, written to Valerius in consolation, in order to help him to face the loss of his son :

" There is no death of anyone, but only in appearance, even as there is no birth of any, save only in seeming. The change from being to becoming seems to be birth, and the change from becoming to being seems to be death, but in reality no one is

ever born, nor does one ever die. It is simply a being visible and then invisible; the former through the density of matter, and the latter because of the subtlety of being—being which is ever the same, its only change being motion and rest. For being has this necessary peculiarity, that its change is brought about by nothing external to itself; but whole becomes parts and parts become whole in the oneness of the all. And if it be asked: What is this which sometimes is seen and sometimes not seen, now in the same, now in the different?—it might be answered: It is the way of everything here in the world below that when it is filled out with matter it is visible, owing to the resistance of its density, but is invisible, owing to its subtlety, when it is rid of matter, though matter still surround it and flow through it in that immensity of space which hems it in but knows no birth or death.

"But why has this false notion [of birth and death] remained so long without a refutation? Some think that what has happened through them, they have themselves brought about. They are ignorant that the individual is brought to birth *through* parents, not by parents, just as a thing produced *through* the earth is not produced *from* it. The change which comes to the individual is nothing that is caused by his visible surroundings, but rather a change in the one thing which is in every individual.

"And what other name can we give to it but primal being? 'Tis it alone that acts and suffers

becoming all for all, through all eternal Deity, deprived and wronged of its own self by names and forms. But this is a less serious thing than that a man should be bewailed, when he has passed from man to God by change of state and not by the destruction of his nature. The fact is that so far from mourning death you ought to honour it and reverence it. The best and fittest way for you to honour death is now to leave the one who's gone to God, and set to work to play the ruler over those left in your charge as you were wont to do. It would be a disgrace for such a man as you to owe your cure to time and not to reason, for time makes even common people cease from grief. The greatest thing is a strong rule, and of the greatest rulers he is best who first can rule himself. And how is it permissible to wish to change what has been brought to pass by will of God. If there's a law in things, and there *is* one, and it is God who has appointed it, the righteous man will have no wish to try to change good things, for such a wish is selfishness, and counter to the law, but he will think that all that comes to pass is a good thing. Oh! heal yourself, give justice to the wretched and console them; so shall you dry your tears. You should not set your private woes above your public cares, but rather set your public cares before your private woes. And see as well what consolation you already have! The nation sorrows with you for your son. Make some return to those who weep with

you; and this you will more quickly do if you will cease from tears than if you still persist. Have you not friends? Why! you have yet another son. Have you not even still the one that's gone? You have!—will answer anyone who really thinks. For 'that which is' doth cease not—nay *is* just for the very fact that it will be for aye; or else the 'is not' is, and how could that be when the 'is' doth never cease to be?

"Again it will be said you fail in piety to God and are unjust. 'Tis true. You fail in piety to God, you fail in justice to your boy; nay more, you fail in piety to him as well. Would'st know what death is? Then make me dead and send me off to company with death, and if you will not change the dress you've put on it, you will have straightway made me better than yourself." [1]

Here is a treatise on death! Here indeed is a dissertation from the Divine Wisdom. It is no wonder that this letter remains to us, for it would be carefully kept by the receiver and found by his descendants, among his most treasured possessions. Thus it might easily find its way into a cherished collection of the philosopher's letters.

A number of treatises were also written by Apollonius but only fragments of these have come down to us. The following are the titles of some of them.

1. *The Mystic Rites or Concerning Sacrifices.* Philostratus tells us that this treatise sets down the

[1] G. R. S. Mead, *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 149.

proper method of sacrifice to every god, the proper hours of prayer and offering. He had come across this treatise in many temples and cities and in the libraries of philosophers, for it was widely circulated, and it is said that its rules were engraved on brazen pillars at Byzantium.[1] The most important part is quoted by Eusebius thus: "'Tis best to make no sacrifice to God at all, no lighting of a fire, no calling Him by any name that men employ for things of sense. For God is over all, the first; and only after Him do come the other gods. For He doth stand in need of naught e'en from the gods, much less from us small men—naught that the earth brings forth, nor any life she nurseth, or even any thing the stainless air contains. The only fitting sacrifice to God is man's best reason, and not the word that comes from out his mouth.

"We men should ask the best of beings through the best thing in us, for what is good—I mean by means of mind, for mind needs no material things to make its prayer. So then, to God, the mighty One, who's over all, no sacrifice should ever be lit up."[2]

Mr. Mead adds that Noack tells us that scholarship is convinced of the genuineness of this fragment.

[1] One is tempted to wonder what relation these brazen pillars bear to the bronze doors at Byzantium mentioned on p. 9.

[2] Præparat. Evangel., IV, 12-13, Ed. Dindorf. (Leipzig, 1867), I. 176, 177.

2. Four books entitled *The Oracles—or Concerning Divination.* Philostratus says that he had never heard of anyone possessing a copy of this rare book but that this treatise was based upon what Apollonius had learned in India.

3. The *Life of Pythagoras.* Both Porphyry and Iamblichus refer to this work, Iamblichus quoting a long passage from it.

4. The *Will of Apollonius.* A summary of his doctrines was contained in this Will which was written in the Ionic dialect. Eudocia tells of many other works, among them a *Hymn to Memory.*

The attitude of Apollonius towards the prayers in use in those days seems to have been rather whimsical, as instanced by a remark, made in his youth, to one of the priests of Æsculapius: "Since then the gods know all things, I think that one who enters the temple with a right conscience within him should pray thus: 'Give me, ye gods, what is my due!'"

When asked by the Pontifex Maximus Telesinus: "When you enter the temples, for what do you pray?" he replied: "I pray that righteousness may rule, the laws remain unbroken, the wise be poor and others rich, but honestly."

The reply of Apollonius to the officer who asked him how he dared enter the dominions of Babylon without permission is worth recording: "The whole earth is mine; and it is given me to journey through it."

Damis tells us that on that long journey which they made into India Apollonius prayed at Babylon: "God of the sun, send thou me o'er the earth so far as e'er 'tis good for thee and me; and may I come to know the good, and never know the bad nor they know me."

Damis adds that one of his most general prayers was: "Grant me, ye gods, to have little and need naught."

Apollonius would receive none of the many gifts of money which were so constantly offered to him, nor would any of his followers or disciples; for instance, when they refused the gifts which, in true Oriental fashion, King Vardan offered them, Apollonius said: "You see, my hands, though many, are all like each other." And to the King's question as to what gift Apollonius would bring back to him from India, the philosopher answered: "A gift that will please you, Sire. For if my stay there should make me wiser, I shall come back to you better than I am."

Apollonius had a way of chaffing people out of unpleasant or foolish ways: "Young sir," he remarked to one who had more money than mind: "Methinks it is not you who own your house, but your house you.'

And to the dangerous question of Tigellinus: "What think you of Nero?" Apollonius replied: "I think better of him than you do, for you think he ought to sing, and I think he ought to keep silent."

When questioned seriously, Apollonius would take infinite pains to give real help to his questioner, and to Vespasian's earnest prayer: "Teach me what should a good king do?" he is reported as answering: "You ask me what cannot be taught. For kingship is the greatest thing within a mortal's reach; it is not taught. Yet will I tell you what if you will do, you will do well. Count not that wealth which is stored up—in what is this superior to the sand haphazard heaped? nor that which comes from men who groan beneath taxation's heavy weight—for gold that comes from tears is base and black. You'll use wealth best of any King, if you supply the needs of those in want and make their wealth secure for those with many goods. Be fearful of the power to do whate'er you please, so will you use it with more prudence. Do not lop off the ears of corn that show beyond the rest and raise their heads—for Aristotle is not just in this—but rather weed their disaffection out like tares from corn, and show yourself a fear to stirrers-up of strife not in 'I punish you' but in 'I *will* do so.' Submit yourself to law, O prince, for you will make the laws with greater wisdom if you do not despise the law yourself. Pay reverence more than ever to the gods; great are the gifts you have received from them, and for great things you pray. In what concerns the State act as a king; in what concerns yourself, act as a private man." [1]

[1] Philostratus, V, 36.

In the course of a dialogue between Apollonius and the abbot of a Gymnosophist Community, Apollonius makes these pregnant remarks: "Imagination is a workman wiser far than imitation; for imitation only makes what it has seen, whereas imagination makes what it has never seen, conceiving it with reference to the thing it really is. Imagination is one of the most potent faculties, for it enables us to reach nearer to realities." . . .

Again, when Demetrius was trying to dissuade Apollonius from braving Domitian at Rome: "The law obliges us to die for liberty, and nature ordains that we should die for our parents, our friends, or our children. All men are bound by these duties. But a higher duty is laid upon the sage; he must die for his principles and the truth he holds dearer than life. It is not the law that lays this choice upon him, it is not nature; it is the strength and courage of his own soul. Though fire or sword threaten him, it will not overcome his resolution or force from him the slightest falsehood; but he will guard the secrets of others' lives and all that has been entrusted to his honour as religiously as the secrets of initiation. And I know more than other men, for I know that of all that I know, I know some things for the good, some for the wise, some for myself, some for the gods, but naught for tyrants. I think that a wise man does nothing alone or by himself; no thought of his so secret but that he has himself as witness to it. And whether

the famous saying : ' Know thyself,' be from Apollo or from some sage who learnt to know himself and proclaimed it as a good for all, I think the wise man who knows himself and has his own spirit in constant comradeship, to fight at his own right hand, will neither cringe at what the vulgar fear, nor dare to do what most men do without the slightest shame." [1]

While speaking to the Gymnosophists concerning " the rule of silence regarding the divine science," Apollonius said that Pythagoras was not the inventor of it. " It was the immemorial wisdom, and Pythagoras himself had learnt it from the Indians. This wisdom, he continued, had spoken to him in his youth ; she had said : ' For sense, young sir, I have no charms ; my cup is filled with toils unto the brim. Would anyone embrace my way of life, he must resolve to banish from his board all food that once bore life, to lose the memory of wine, and thus no more to wisdom's cup—befoul the cup that doth consist of wine-untainted souls. Nor shall wool warm him, nor aught that's made from any beast. I give my servants shoes of bast and as they can to sleep. And if I find them overcome with love's delights, I've ready pits down into which that justice which doth follow hard on wisdom's foot, doth drag and thrust them ; indeed, so stern am I to those who choose my way, that e'en upon their tongues I bind a chain. Now hear from me

[1] Philostratus, VII, 15.

what things thou'lt gain, if thou endure. An innate sense of fitness and of right, and ne'er to feel that any's lot is better than thy own ; tyrants to strike with fear instead of being a fearsome slave to tyranny ; to have the gods more greatly bless thy scanty gifts than those who pour before them blood of bulls. If thou art pure, I'll give thee how to know what things will be as well, and fill thy eyes so full of light, that thou may'st recognise the gods, the heroes know, and prove and try the shadowy forms that feign the shapes of men.' " [1]

We have only to look up the following references in Philostratus (I, 24, 31 ; IV, 11 ; V, 25) to realise that Apollonius would never join in the blood-sacrifices so prevalent in those days—a rule which was always followed by the members of the inner section of the Pythagorean school. Here I will quote some words used by Apollonius to his royal host at Babylon when invited to take part in the chase in one of those preserved hunting parks of the Babylonian monarchs : " Sire, have you forgotten that even when you sacrifice I will not be present ? Much less then would I do these beasts to death, and all the more when their spirit is broken and they are penned in contrary to their nature." [2]

The above quotation proves to us that Apollonius did not follow this rule of life only for purity's sake

[1] Philostratus, VI, 11.
[2] *Ibid.*, I, 38.

but also from an innate horror of inflicting pain upon any living creature.

After studying this wonderful life and listening to the words that fell from the lips of Apollonius, we are not surprised to learn that at the close of this life he took that great step that makes him known to us as the Master Jesus. Perhaps the truest glimpse we have ever been given of this mighty Personality comes to us through the words written down by Mrs. Besant in *Esoteric Christianity* (pp. 142-144, *Second Edition*, 1905):

"That Mighty One who had used the body of Jesus as His vehicle, and whose guardian care extends over the whole spiritual evolution of the fifth race of humanity, gave into the strong hands of the holy disciple who had surrendered to Him his body the care of the infant Church. Perfecting his human evolution, Jesus became one of the Masters of Wisdom, and took Christianity under His special charge, ever seeking to guide it to the right lines, to protect, to guard and nourish it. He was the Hierophant in the Christian Mysteries, the direct Teacher of the Initiates. His the inspiration that kept alight the Gnosis in the Church, until the superincumbent mass of ignorance became so great that even His breath could not fan the flame sufficiently to prevent its extinguishment. His the patient labour which strengthened soul after soul to endure through the darkness, and cherish within itself the spark of mystic longing,

the thirst to find the Hidden God. His the steady inpouring of truth into every brain ready to receive it, so that hand stretched out to hand across the centuries and passed on the torch of knowledge, which thus was never extinguished. His the Form which stood beside the rack and in the flames of the burning pile, cheering His confessors and His martyrs, soothing the anguish in their pains, and filling their hearts with His peace. His the impulse which spoke in the thunder of Savonarola, which guided the calm wisdom of Erasmus, which inspired the deep ethics of the God-intoxicated Spinoza. His the energy which impelled Roger Bacon, Galileo and Paracelsus in their searchings into nature. His the beauty that allured Fra Angelico and Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, that inspired the genius of Michel-Angelo, that shone before the eyes of Murillo, and that gave the power that raised the marvels of the world, the Duomo of Milan, the San Marco of Venice, the Cathedral of Florence. His the melody that breathed in the masses of Mozart, the sonatas of Beethoven, the oratorios of Handel, the fugues of Bach, the austere splendour of Brahms. His the Presence that cheered the solitary mystics, the hunted occultists, the patient seekers after truth. By persuasion and by menace, by the eloquence of a Saint Francis and by the gibes of a Voltaire, by the sweet submission of a Thomas à Kempis, and the rough virility of a Luther, He sought to instruct and awaken, to win

into holiness or to scourge from evil. Through the long centuries He has striven and laboured, and, with all the mighty burden of the Churches to carry, He has never left uncared for or unsolaced one human heart that cried to Him for help. And now He is striving to turn to the benefit of Christendom part of the great flood of the Wisdom poured out for the refreshing of the world, and He is seeking through the Churches for some who have ears to hear the Wisdom, and who will answer to His appeal for messengers to carry it to His flock: 'Here am I; send me.'"

#734

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